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MEAT INSPECTION, low-cost protection



N - 17226 - To qualify for Federal inspection, slaughtering and processing plants must have efficient sanitary systems, good lighting and ventilation. USDA specialists pass on all new construction and remodeling plans.



N - 29380 - Before slaughter, animals are examined by veterinary inspectors and trained assistants. Healthy animals are passed. Those that show any suspicious or abnormal symptoms are separated and tagged for special handling.



N - 10140 - This stamp of approval, "U. S. INSP'D & P'S'D," is the confidence-inspiring symbol of U. S. Department of Agriculture's Meat Inspection. It assures consumers that their meat comes from healthy animals and is safe and wholesome.

At a cost of about a penny a month per person, U. S. citizens are buying vital protection for their National meat supply.

This protection is given by the Meat Inspection Division of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. It assures that the 120 pounds per person of Federally inspected meats we eat every year in this country are clean, wholesome, and unadulterated.

Last year, Federal meat inspectors passed on the health of nearly 100 million meat animals. Seven out of 100 of them were found with conditions that required partial condemnation; about 240 thousand animals were condemned as totally unfit for food.

USDA meat inspectors also kept from U. S. dining tables some 26 million pounds--about 100 thousand pounds every working day--of unwholesome processed meat foods. These foods include sausages, weiners, bologna, cured hams, canned meats, frozen meat dinners, and lard--in various stages of processing.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Information

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Processed meat foods require constant re-inspection. Even though meat is sound before processing starts, it can deteriorate or become contaminated or adulterated during processing. Meat inspectors condemn such foods before they reach the market.

Unsound additives--including spices and other products used with meat foods--amounting to more than half a million pounds annually are rejected by Federal meat inspectors because of contamination by insects or rodents, or because they are otherwise unsafe or unwholesome.

Federal meat inspection begins with approval of plant construction and equipment. Before a new slaughtering or processing plant is built or remodeled, specialists check the plans to make sure efficient sanitary and inspection facilities are provided.

Federal supervision and inspection continues through each stage of preparation of meat for market, from the live animal to the carcass and then through processing to the container and label. All labels used on Federally inspected meat products must be approved prior to use. They are closely examined to insure that they are correct and informative.

Reputable meat processors welcome Federal meat inspection, which guards the industry against the occasional unscrupulous processor. Meat and meat products are easily adulterated. Spoiled meat can be made to look and smell fresh. Meat can be made to soak up tremendous amounts of water. Cooking time of pork can be shortened to prevent meat shrinkage, but the cut in cooking time may interfere with the safety or wholesomeness of the product.

Federal meat inspectors also pass on imported meat and meat products, and certify U. S. meat for export. Other countries accept U. S. meat products as wholesome for importing when certified as Federally inspected and passed. An export market for more than 660 million pounds of meat and meat food products annually is thus assured.



N - 29359 - After slaughter, the head, glands, and organs of the animal are systematically inspected for evidence of abnormalities. Here a meat inspector slices head glands of a hog into thin sections to detect abnormal and diseased conditions.



N - 29361 - Veterinary inspectors and their assistants make a thorough examination of viscera, for any indication of infectious diseases and parasitic or other abnormal conditions.



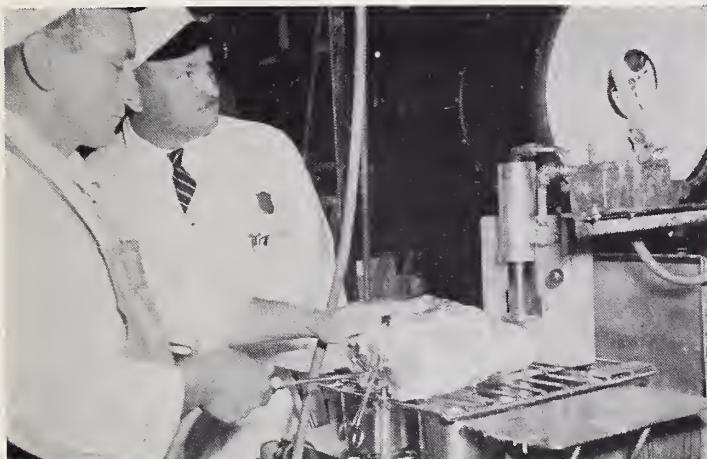
N - 29381 - Every carcass is examined by sight and expert touch as it passes the Federal inspector on the inspection line.



N-4683 - This carcass is one of about 240,000 that were condemned during one year as unfit for food. Condemned meat is held under Federal lock and key until it is processed for fertilizer or inedible grease.



BN-9611 - An ever-increasing array of processed meats and meat foods -- frozen, canned, cured -- receive Federal inspection. Only wholesome unadulterated products may carry the "U. S. Inspected and Passed" mark on containers or labels.



N-29373 - Federal meat inspector supervises the pumping of pickling material into hams. After curing and smoking, the weight of hams must return to the original uncured weight.



BN-2022 - Is the internal temperature of hams high enough to prepare them for a ready-to-serve label? The Federal meat inspector makes sure it is. Pork or pork products customarily eaten without cooking get especially careful inspection.



N-17263 - Meat inspectors pass on meat and meat foods in various stages of processing as in this frozen-meat processing plant. Though meat is sound before processing starts, it can deteriorate, and be contaminated or adulterated during processing.



N-29362 - Do the ingredients on the retail label of a package of frankfurters conform with those listed on the processor's rack for that lot? The USDA meat inspector checks on this to assure consumers a truthfully labeled product.



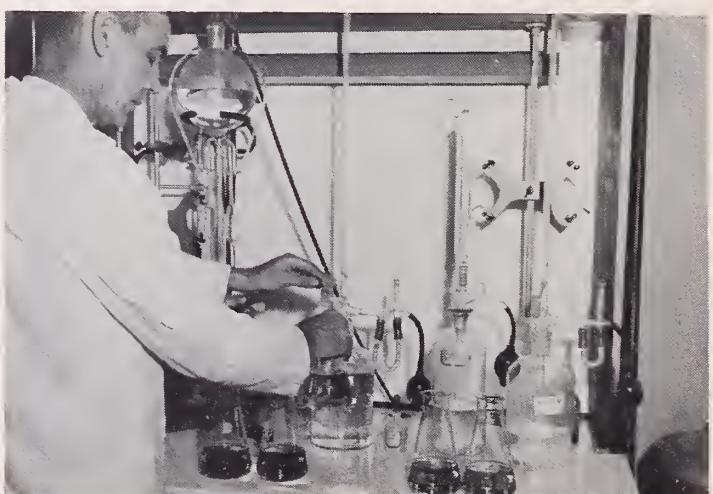
N-33139 - Federal meat inspectors oversee the packaging of bacon to see that the packages are not short-weighted. They also check on the cleanliness of plant employees, packaging materials, and the equipment used.



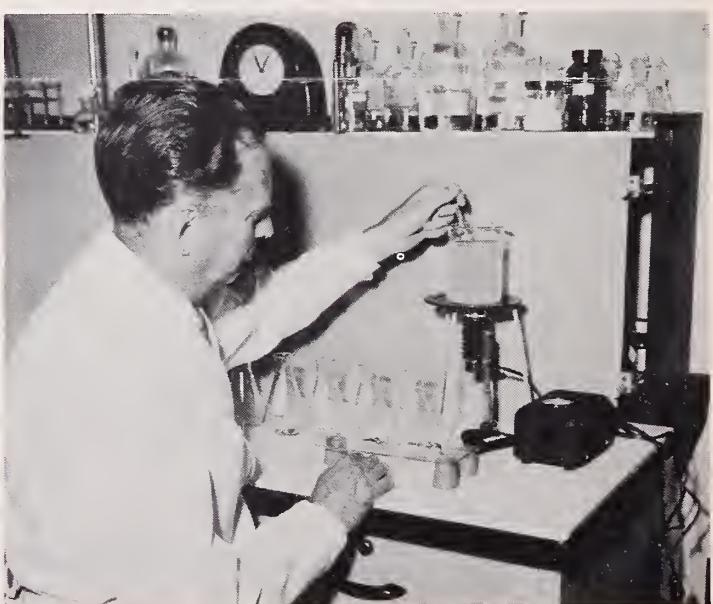
N-17333 - From time to time meat inspectors pick up samples of processed foods and ingredients used in the foods, for laboratory tests. Samples of containers and wrappings are also examined to assure they contain no harmful chemicals.



N-17225 - Labels and sketches for use on Federally inspected meat and meat products are reviewed to see that they contain the required consumer information and that no misleading statements or symbols are included.



N-17228 - Chemical tests of protein content, fat, moisture, and amounts of other permitted substances are made in this laboratory. In other laboratories bacteriological tests are made to assure the safety of meat products.



BN-9478X - Here a USDA scientist checks on the presence of minute residues of toxic pesticides. Meat and meat products are also tested for residues of hormones and antibiotics.